

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 922

By Naifeh

A RESOLUTION congratulating Coach Bruce Pearl and the University of Tennessee Volunteer men's basketball team on their recent victory over the University of Memphis team.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly are delighted to commend those sports teams in this State that bring honor to Tennessee through their successful exploits on the field of play; and

WHEREAS, one such team is the University of Tennessee men's basketball team which, on Saturday, February 23, 2008, defeated the top-ranked Memphis Tigers in Memphis and, as a direct result of such victory, have been justly recognized as the best team in the nation; and

WHEREAS, Saturday's game marked the first occasion on which two Tennessee teams met in the regular season while ranked first and second in the nation; the Volunteers, through their unwavering dedication, tremendous defense, and timely free-throw shooting, found victory in Memphis, thereby capturing the team's first-ever top ranking in the national polls; and

WHEREAS, the crowd of 18,389 created an electrifying atmosphere at the FedEx Forum in Memphis, an atmosphere that did not faze the Vols as they dismantled the touted Memphis offense and, as the final horn sounded, celebrated their 66-62 win; and

WHEREAS, the Vols, ably led by Head Coach Bruce Pearl, exhibited the finest tenets of sportsmanship and team play, keeping their heads about them throughout the forty-minute game; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee handed Memphis its first loss of the season and also ended the Tigers' forty-five-game regular season winning streak and forty-seven-game home winning streak; and

WHEREAS, with twenty-five wins against only two losses, the Volunteer team has established the best twenty-seven game record in the school's history, and their ranking as the

top team in the country marks the first time the Tennessee men's team has ascended to that coveted position; and

WHEREAS, the win over Memphis also marked the first time in nearly three decades that the Vols have toppled the country's top team; not since the 1969 team defeated number-one-ranked South Carolina have the Volunteers achieved this feat; and

WHEREAS, Saturday's win improves on what has already been a stellar season; the Vols currently lead the Southeastern Conference in scoring (83.9 points per game), scoring margin (+14.8), assists (19.08 per game), steals (10.23 per game), turnover margin (+6.69), assist-turnover ratio (1.46), three-point field goals made (9.31 per game), and three-point field goal defense (.291); and

WHEREAS, the Volunteers were led by the play of forward Tyler Smith, who scored sixteen points and had three assists in the game, guard JaJuan Smith, who pulled down ten rebounds, and Memphis-native J.P. Prince and forward Wayne Chism, who accounted for thirteen points apiece in the victory; and

WHEREAS, both J.P. Prince and guard Chris Lofton sank high-pressure free throws in the waning seconds of the game; Chris Lofton's two free throws with 2.9 seconds remaining in the game ensured victory by extending the lead to four points; and

WHEREAS, always exhibiting a formidable team mentality and utilizing their strengths by playing as a unit, the Volunteers have attained the pinnacle of regular season success; the 2007-2008 Volunteers are Quinn Cannington, Ryan Childress, Wayne Chism, Duke Crews, Rick Daniels-Mulholland, Jordan Howell, Justin Jackson, Chris Lofton, Steven Pearl, J.P. Prince, JaJuan Smith, Ramar Smith, Tyler Smith, Josh Tabb, Cameron Tatum, Tanner Wild, and Brian Williams; and

WHEREAS, third-year coach Bruce Pearl has assembled a staff of the highest quality, and their assistance shall surely enable the Volunteers to attain an even greater level of excellence before the conclusion of the season. He is assisted by Associate Head Coach Tony Jones, Assistant Coach Steve Forbes, Assistant Coach Jason Shay, Director of Operations Ken Johnson, Trainer Chad Newman, and Strength Coach Troy Wills; and

WHEREAS, the University of Tennessee men's basketball team has inspired and entertained their fans, the university's student body, the City of Knoxville, and the entire State of Tennessee, and their achievement of the highest level of excellence is wholly deserving of formal recognition; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby congratulate Coach Bruce Pearl and the University of Tennessee Volunteer men's basketball team on their victory over the previously top-ranked Memphis Tigers, applaud them for capturing the school's first-ever top ranking, and extend our best wishes for their continued success for the remainder of the season.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.